

VZCZCXRO6980
PP RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC
DE RUEHBJ #3950/01 2901047
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 161047Z OCT 08
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0475
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1713
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0742
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 6761
RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA 0088
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 1392
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 1395

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 003950

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [EFIN](#) [ECIN](#) [EAGR](#) [PL](#) [SN](#) [JA](#) [NK](#)

SK, PK, NL, SI, RU, VM, CH

SUBJECT: OCTOBER 16 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: ZARDARI VISIT,
FINANCIAL CRISIS, TAINTED BEANS, ASEM SUMMIT, SIX-PARTY
TALKS

11. Spokesperson Qin Gang made the following key points
at the October 16 MFA press briefing:

-- China will take seriously any request from Pakistan
to help that country weather the financial crisis.
Qin would not, however, give details of any agreement
on financial assistance reached between Chinese
President Hu Jintao and visiting Pakistan President
Asif Ali Zardari.

-- China stands ready to work with other countries to
deal with the financial crisis. China has not
received any invitations to attend a summit meeting
regarding the turmoil.

-- Several European leaders, including German
Chancellor Merkel, will visit China to attend the 7th
Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) October 24-25.

-- Six-Party Talks: China is in consultations with
the other parties to convene a heads of delegation
meeting at a "convenient time."

-- China will make an announcement "soon" regarding
the Olympic regulations governing foreign journalists,
which are set to expire October 17.

Pakistan President's Visit: Energy and Financial Aid

12. Reporters repeatedly asked MFA Spokesperson Qin
Gang to provide specifics on agreements signed between
President Hu Jintao and Pakistani President Asif Ali
Zardari during Zardari's visit to China. Qin merely
stated that the two sides had signed a wide array of
deals covering economics, trade, mining, agriculture,
the environment and broadcasting. Qin said he did not
have details about any energy deals signed during the
visit. China and Pakistan have cooperated on civilian
nuclear energy and will continue to work together.
This cooperation, Qin stressed, is for peaceful
purposes and is under the supervision of the IAEA. On
financial assistance, Qin said China is an "all-
weather friend" and will "take seriously" any requests
made by Pakistan to help that country weather the
financial crisis. China and Pakistan remain in
communication about the financial turmoil, Qin stated.

Financial Crisis

13. China has given positive and steady signals that it

stands ready to work with other countries, including those in the East Asia region, to deal with the financial crisis, Qin said. China takes note of the many proposals to address the crisis, including ideas to hold summit meetings. China is willing to cooperate and communicate with other countries, though China has yet to receive any invitations to participate in a summit meeting on the crisis.

ASEM Summit and Upcoming Visits

¶4. Qin Gang announced that the President of Slovenia, along with the Prime Ministers of Vietnam, Denmark, Poland, Singapore and the Netherlands will visit China to participate in the 7th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Beijing October 24-25. German Chancellor Merkel will also attend the meeting.

Six-Party Talks

¶5. China is in consultation with the other parties in the Six-Part Talks to convene a heads of delegation meeting at a "convenient time," Qin stated. China will announce further details soon. Asked about recent statements in the DPRK press that North Korea may cut ties to South Korea if the South continues a policy of "confrontation," Qin said China is committed to helping the DPRK and ROK achieve peace and reconciliation through dialogue and cooperation. The

BEIJING 00003950 002 OF 002

Six-Party Talks have made "major progress" and China urges all parties to honor their commitments, meet each other halfway and jointly promote the development of the Six-Party process.

Thailand-Cambodia Clashes

¶6. China has expressed concern over the Thailand-Cambodia conflict and urges both sides to exercise restraint and to settle the dispute through dialogue, Qin said.

Foreign Journalist Regulations

¶7. A Christian Science Monitor journalist pushed Qin Gang to give a yes-or-no answer on whether the Olympic regulations governing foreign journalists (which allow foreign journalists to travel without first seeking local government permission) would be extended. The regulations are set to expire October 17. Qin noted that he understood journalists' eagerness on the issue, saying that information would be released "shortly." Qin then repeated points made at previous press briefings, stating that China will continue "reform and opening" and will "welcome and facilitate" the work of foreign reporters.

Tainted Chinese Beans in Japan

¶8. China takes food safety seriously and has expressed sympathy for Japanese consumers harmed by frozen beans tainted with pesticides, Qin stated. The company in Shandong Province that produces the beans has an "excellent" safety record, and the beans were found to be pesticide free by inspectors prior to export. Only one bag of beans in the entire batch was found to contain pesticides. China facilitated an October 16 visit to the Shandong producer by Japanese officials. Qin noted that Japanese authorities, police and the media increasingly believe the contamination to be a

"criminal incident" and not related to food safety.
China will continue to work with Japanese authorities
to find the truth.

Chinalco and Lehman Brothers Collapse

19. A journalist asked if the Chinese Government was trying to help the Aluminum Corporation of China (Chinalco) retrieve USD 8 billion worth of shares Chinalco owns in the mine company Rio Tinto. Chinalco's Rio Tinto stock was held in a Lehman Brothers account and, following Lehman's bankruptcy, was transferred to a custodial account in Hong Kong. Some press reports allege that the Chinese Government is pressuring Hong Kong authorities to release the shares. Qin Gang would not comment on the specifics of the case but said that given the current environment, Chinese companies are concerned about their overseas assets.
PICCUTA